



**THIS IS MY
STORY**

the power of
story telling

MCG

Study Guide

What Motivates You?

May 23rd – May 29th



Prayer Requests:

Wednesday May 23rd– Grace and Mercy as Motivational Tools

Reading Jonah 4:1-2

“...I knew you were a gracious and merciful God...”

Simon Sinek, author of “Find Your Why” wrote, “People don't buy **what** you do; they buy **why** you do it.” Think about the first time you were sold on a product, you did not buy a slap chop because they chop cashews – any knife would do that. You bought it because it was efficient, easy to clean, easy to store, and fast – like a slap. Or, perhaps, consider the service of volunteering. In its own right, the very act of volunteering is buying into the ‘why’ rather than simply the ‘what.’ People volunteer because of the philosophy behind an organization (e.g., feeding the homeless, providing care for those in sex trafficking) That is the ‘why.’

Last Christmas, director Michael Gracey's *The Greatest Showman* hit the theatres globally, telling the life of P. T. Barnum – the greatest showman. His drive for life was met with a motivation to inspire people through his circus – which teetered from time-to-time between utter failure and absolute success. Both the movie and life of Barnum inspired countless people to be themselves and live extraordinary lives – regardless of the outcome.

In the Old Testament, Jonah was a man whose motivation was to inspire people with the words of Yahweh, to remain close to Him. At one point, God asked him to go to Nineveh and tell the people there to follow a

god they were not following otherwise they would be destroyed – that seems like a heavy task.

The people of Nineveh were wicked, motivated by their own desires and ambitions which did not align with the ideologies and values that God desired for their lives. Jonah, on the other hand, was motivated to share God’s word anywhere he felt comfortable – going to Nineveh was not in his comfort zone. When it came time to go where there are uncertainties and possible risk, Jonah chose to stay away and avoid the call of God.

If you remember the end of the story, you know that Jonah did complete the mission but waited for Nineveh’s demise. When it did not happen, Jonah was furious. He lacked the understanding of the ‘why’ behind his job as a prophet. God’s ‘why’ in saving Nineveh was to show the extent of His grace and mercy to all people – even Ninevites.

Meditation/Application

This week, try to think about how you can be motivated to share the same grace and mercy with those you do life with.

Prayer Points:

As you pray for your church family, community, MCG and yourself, please remember these prayer requests:

- Pray for upcoming exams for students
- Pray for country of Syria and surrounding ones
-

Thursday May 24th – The Power of Classic Rock

Reading Matthew 28:19

Matthew 28: 19 “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Recently, I was reaffirmed of my love for classic rock music. Much like the spring season which evokes a passion to buy a motorcycle, new and shelved musicians come full circle in my iTunes playlist and waves of emotion blissfully capture my imagination at the sound of these artists. I’ve always appreciated the genre and the talent of Springsteen, The Rolling Stones, and most recently Bon Jovi. Not two weeks ago, I experienced a true Bon Jovi concert which reaffirmed a euphoric love for classic rock. I watched as people danced, screamed, sang, cried and reached out to touch the man of the hour. Upon leaving the auditorium I couldn’t help but think about the influence Jesus would have had in His day. Sure, Jesus didn’t have hit singles like *Livin’ on a Prayer* and *You Give Love a Bad Name*, but His message was far greater. This had me thinking... *if people are this excited about classic rock, how much more excited should we be about Jesus?*

In His day, Jesus was a radical. Motivated to forgive sins, preach to crowds, heal - even on the sabbath! As you breeze through the New Testament, do not overlook moments where the crowds were so large that Jesus taught from a boat, multiplied a lunch to feed thousands, or perhaps even my favourite account - a woman reaching out to simply touch the Messiah’s robe for restoration and healing.

The influence is far greater than a 21st century, Bon Jovi listener can comprehend. If one music artist can draw out 17 thousand people, my strong hunch is that Jesus the Messiah would be no different. Why? His motivation to share the truth of the Gospel with people and their desire to dance, scream, sing, cry, and reach out to touch the man of the hour. Jesus’ message is met with profound motivation to share hope and restoration for a better life and it’s what people need and want to hear, especially today.

I am reminded of the mission Jesus gives in Matthew 28:19, “...make disciples of all nations...” Jesus’ life was to reorient the people by reminding them of where they ought to put their trust - in God. He motivated to spread the word about His Father to all corners (if you’re a flat earth theorist) of the world. His influence becomes our inspiration to be motivated in sharing the ‘good news.’

Meditation/Application

This week, consider the influence Jesus had on the culture of the time. Consider how motivated people became to bring the sick to Him, through rooftops, crowds, and even racing behind to bring the dead alive.¹ Be aware of the motivation you have to share the truth of God’s word with those you do life with, and consider asking God how you can make a difference in their lives.

Prayer Points:

As you pray for your church family, community, MCG and yourself, please remember these prayer requests:

- Pray for our people to be living testaments to their communities during the summer months when the weather brings neighbours outside more often
- Pray for boldness of the saints to bear witness

¹ John 4:46-54

Friday May 25th – Authentic Branding = Loyal Customers

Reading John 10:10

“I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”

We all love a good cup of coffee, don't we? One of the leading brands in the coffee industry is none other than Starbucks. In 2017, Starbucks' revenue exceeded 22 billion dollars. That's a lot of lattes!

Howard Schultz, creator of the Starbucks company, once said, “Mass advertising can help build brands, but authenticity is what makes them last. If people believe they share values with a company, they will stay loyal to the brand.” The same can be said about Christianity.

Think about the life of Jesus. Before He was even born, there were countless accounts within the Old Testament foreshadowing the Messiah's arrival (e.g., Exodus 12, Jonah 1). Now jump into the New Testament, and we see John the Baptist advertise the coming of Christ, and a star lighting the way for wise men to find him in Bethlehem. All signs were pointing to Jesus, but was it worth it? As the life of Jesus unfolds, people see the amazing things he did. He lived a life of complete authenticity. Plus, Jesus offered people unprecedented value - eternal life - and people followed.

Schultz was right in saying that if people believe they have value within the company, they will stay loyal to the brand. When people root their identity in Christ and find value in Him, they become loyal and authentic in their faith.

It becomes vitally important for everyone to understand that when we are motivated to live authentically as Christians, it not only affects us as individuals, it also extends to others and helps them understand the necessity of following Christ.

Just like a loyal customer at Starbucks, we can look to the advertisements, or in this case to Scripture, read about who God is, but it's when we know we're valued by God, that the knowledge of seeing

the potential of a relationship motivates us to live it out and have an emotional connection to it.

Meditation/Application

This week ask God to help you live more authentically through Him. It's so easy to get caught up in what the world is trying to advertise and sell to us, but remaining loyal to what Jesus has purchased for us should be our #1 priority.

Prayer Points:

As you pray for your church family, community, MCG and yourself, please remember these prayer requests:

- Pray that you may know how to live as Christ; purpose, simply, relationally, knowing the will of the Father
- Pray for hurting families of NBBC

Saturday May 26th – Run (insert your name), RUN!**Reading Hebrews 12:1-3**

“And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us”

Since early May, I courageously signed up for a Facebook fitness challenge group created by Tony Horton - creator of P90X. For the last three weeks, I, along with 13 thousand others, embarked on a sweaty lunge to become our best selves.

Each day, I see the community board postings about their progress, some who quit 10 minutes in and others who not only completed the daily routine but ADDED ANOTHER workout ‘just for fun’ - sickening. What motivates people to go above and beyond? What motivates people to simply show up? Tony Horton’s philosophy has always been, ‘do your best and forget the rest.’ Just the fact that people show up each day to push PLAY on the DVD player and begin their workout is impressive enough.

Now I’m not suggesting we all go out and run 10k or complete a ‘Total Synergistics’ workout by Mr. Horton, but what I am suggesting is that we look at Hebrews 12:1-3 and consider the words of Paul who used an athletic metaphor to compare to the Christian life.

At the outset of the chapter, we see that life is better together! Have you ever experienced something and felt all alone? Hopelessness often makes us feel like we’re the only ones who ever experience this sort of tragedy. Paul strongly encourages us to look around to see others beside us. cheering us on, and to understand that Jesus set a very clear path for us to run!

You are not alone in your journey. There are others cheering you on, struggling with you, and striving to run the same race. When life gets tough, surround yourselves with like-minded people who will build you up and help you finish that race! Verse 2 indicates where we should look as we run. Often there are distractions that make us want to stop and stand on the sidelines watching others pass by, or we might simply

get tired and want to rest because the race seems long and hard. Paul indicates we should focus on Jesus. Jesus is the flawless trailblazer who endured the race that we could not complete on our own terms.

Finally, verse 3 is where Paul reminds us as New Testament readers, to be motivated! Not only by fixing our eyes on Jesus but as an example to others, of how to keep going when life is tough. You can do it. Focus on Jesus. He made a way for you to experience life and life to the full.² Put on your running shoes and RUN FORREST, RUN!

Meditation/Application

What would it take for you to do life with someone? For you to put on your metaphorical (or literal) running shoes and spend time focusing on Jesus? The race is what you might expect: difficult, endless, tiring, but the reward of finishing and being motivated to embrace the journey with fellow believers makes life a million times more worth the effort.

Prayer Points:

As you pray for your church family, community, MCG and yourself, please remember these prayer requests:

- Pray for those whose stories may include a chapter where they run away from God and are finding their way back
- Pray for endurance of the staff and leadership of NBBC

² John 10:10

Sunday May 27th –

Reading

Sermon Notes:

Meditation/Application

As you think about today's sermon what is one action point that you are taking away?

Prayer Points:

As you pray for your church family, community, MCG and yourself, please remember these prayer requests:

- Pray that this mornings gathering would grow in the hearts and minds of those who hear.
- Pray that many might hear His story through our changed stories

Monday May 28th – Motivated by Greed

Reading Luke 12:15

“Life does not consist in an abundance of possessions”

It is incredible to think that we can be motivated by so many variables in life: money, job, status. What would it take for us to be motivated by something other than self-gain? If you remember from yesterday, Delilah was motivated out of financial gain. She was told that she would be rich if she were to find the secret to Sampson’s strength. She tried relentlessly, and perhaps not so subtly, to discover his physiological loophole.

Back when I was a kid, I remember persuading my siblings to trade my cards or toys for theirs. I would give what I thought was a fair trade for something ‘new to me’ and vice versa. Once my brother had an Action Man doll - a modern G. I. Joe. It had everything - guns, knives, dog sled, snow suit(s) - and I wanted it! I would have given my whole room just to call that possession mine, but I had a mother who knew better and would monitor these transactions. It wasn’t enough for me just to be able to play with it, I had to own it.

I can extract a very important lesson from this illustration: where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. That sounds a lot like a Bible verse, doesn’t it? My brother taught me an enormous lesson that I was not able to recognize at the time. He never said I couldn’t play with his toys, I also never asked. Scripture tells us that God loves a cheerful giver.³ When it comes time to tithe, share a lawn mower, allow someone to drive your car to get groceries, whatever it might be, remember it is our job as Christ followers to reflect a generous, giving spirit.

³ 2 Corinthians 9:7

I didn't end up owning the Action Man figure, but I did have a gracious brother who would allow me to see it anytime I so desired. It's very easy to get taken up by the desire for possessions, but Luke reminds us that life is not about what we can possess, but rather what we give.⁴

Meditation/Application

Ask God how you can bless others this week. Does someone need a ride for errands or is someone's lawn getting out of control? Can you help?

Prayer Points:

As you pray for your church family, community, MCG and yourself, please remember these prayer requests:

- Give thanks for His character in you
- Confess that you are not always like Him; ask for forgiveness and be motivated by what is right, pure and admirable

⁴ Acts 20:35

Tuesday May 29th – FIMD**Reading** Proverbs 18

“...make known among the nations what he has done.”

Read Proverbs 18

“He who gives an answer before he hears, It is folly and shame to him.”

This one is simple: Think before you speak. There have been embarrassing moments in my life, where I experienced foot-in-mouth disease (FIMD). It is horrendous, but don't Google it. What I mean by FIMD is when I say something before I have a chance to consider the matrix of possibilities by which it can be interpreted.

Intentionality is a muscle that needs to be exercised, almost daily, before it can be perfected. I remember at a previous place of employment, the president would host multiple staff meetings throughout the year and as he was sharing the vision for the fiscal year to grow our company's population, I could remember how diplomatic and well-spoken he was. In important moments such as casting vision to a company, there is no place for FIMD.

The Bible speaks very clearly on the subject of speaking intentionally. Remember the story of Solomon? There was a pivotal moment in the narrative of Solomon's reign where he listened to two women fight over the life of an infant. One woman, bitter in spirit, opting to have the child cut in two, the other pleading to simply give the babe to the other woman as long as the child lived. As Solomon stood with the child in one hand and sword in the other, I can only imagine how the story would have gone if Solomon listened to the bitter woman. Solomon thought before he spoke. In the end he discerned that the pleading woman was the infant's true mother.

Every time you fail to pause to think before you speak won't necessarily lead to a life or death ultimatum, but it does have life altering potential. A good remedy for FIMD is found through the Scriptures. Consider even

being quick to speak - perhaps in anger. James 1:19 tells us, “Post this at all the intersections, dear friends: Lead with your ears, follow up with your tongue, and let anger straggle along in the rear. God’s righteousness doesn’t grow from human anger, so throw all spoiled virtue and cancerous evil in the garbage. In simple humility, let our gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvation-garden of your life.”⁵

As leaders in our homes, churches, communities, and other divisions in our lives, may we be reminded that leading with the words of Christ can be profound, motivating us toward greater intentional relationships with those we do life with.

Preparing for your MCG

As you come for you MCG be prepared to share:

- **POTLUCK:** Be mindful about a story you might share regarding the importance of MCG regular group meeting together (ie what it means to you, or how the group has seen God work in or through them)
- **STUDY:** Share from your time of Meditation/Application from each day’s study. What from this study made an impression on you or what confused you?
- **PRAYER WALK/ACTIVITY:** be creative and intentional as you pray/work together.



CALENDAR, PEOPLE and DETAILS HERE:

<https://nbbc.churchcenter.com/groups>

⁵ The Message Bible

Missional Community Group (MCG) Covenant

We desire to grow as followers of Jesus who represent Him and His Kingdom well in all of our life. We recognize that God's plan is for us to grow in and through relationships with other like-minded disciples. As those who identify as neighbourhood missionaries we enter into this covenant so that we might be transformed by God's grace and that together we might be transforming agents in our neighbourhood.

To this end, this year, we therefore covenant to:

- Meet regularly for weekly encouragement, accountability, and fellowship in our Missional Community Group and corporately with all of NBBC.
- Seek to grow in likeness to Jesus by engaging in NBBC MCG's shared practices.
- Nurture loving relationships within our Missional Community, accepting others as Christ has accepted us.
- Faithfully steward the resources that God has given us: time, abilities, resources and energy.
- Together discern where God is at work and join Him in His mission to bring the Kingdom of God to our neighbourhood.

In all that we covenant, we recognize that we are dependant upon the grace of God to enable us and so we joyfully enter this covenant in hope of what He might do in and through us.

Missional Community Group Shared Practices

1. Daily engage in reading Scripture and pray for God to bless NBBC in its missional calling.
2. Weekly purposely and intentionally bless another person.
3. Monthly practise table fellowship with someone in your Missional Community.
4. Respond to the Spirit's prompting as you sense Him leading and directing.
5. Share with others the stories of what God is doing in your life as opportunities arise.